

The ABCD's of Writing Outcomes

Outcomes are specific, measurable statements that convey the intended priorities of a department. Outcomes should meet these criteria:

- **Meaningful:** How does the outcome support the departmental mission or priorities?
- **Manageable:** What is needed to foster the achievement of the outcome? Is the outcome realistic?
- **Measurable:** How will you know if the outcome is achieved? What is the assessment method?

Types of Outcomes

1. Program outcomes examine what a department intends to achieve or accomplish for its own improvement and/or in support of institutional or divisional priorities. They are statements indicating how a department will impact the needs or satisfaction of students, faculty, staff, and/or other institutional stakeholders.
2. Student learning outcomes examine knowledge or skills that students develop through department interaction. They are statements indicating what a participant (usually students) will know, think or do, as a result of a course, activity, program, etc.

ABCD Structure of an Outcome:

- **Audience:** Who does the outcome pertain to?
- **Behavior/What:** What action do you expect the audience to do or know? (Bloom's Taxonomy, on the back of this sheet, is a great resource for this piece)
- **Condition/How:** Under what conditions or circumstances will the behavior occur?
- **Degree/How much:** How much will be accomplished, how well will the behavior need to be performed, or to what level?

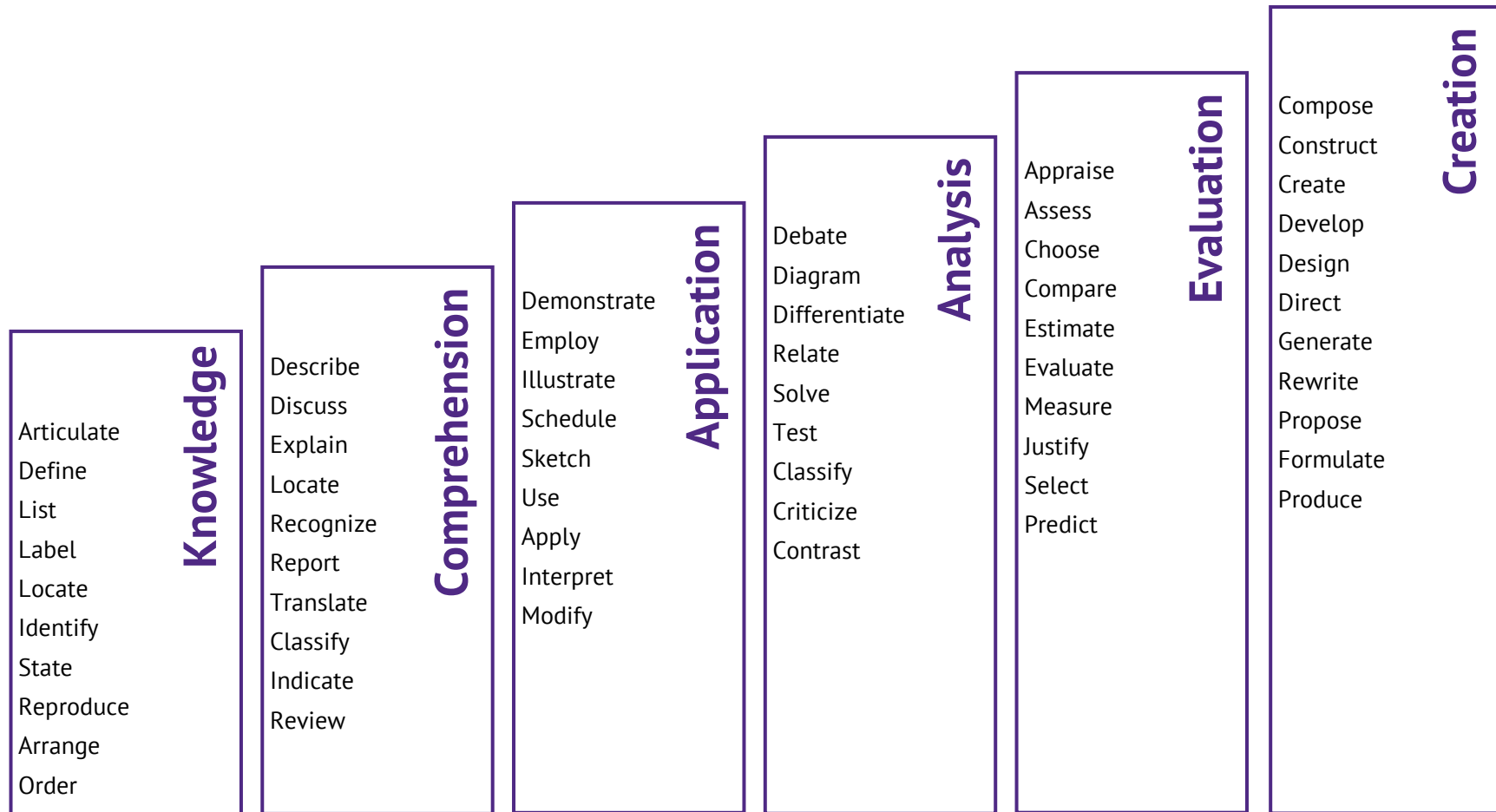
Examples:

1. Program Outcome:
The Department of Business & Fiscal Affairs will decrease financial statement audit findings to zero over the next year by preparing the annual statements in accordance with the appropriate standards and presenting said statements fairly.
2. Student Learning Outcome:
Graduating seniors in the Business Management B.S.B.A. program will demonstrate awareness of ethical implications of business decisions by completing a standardized ethics scenario with 90% of students achieving a satisfactory (or higher) score.

Adapted from Campus Labs Writing Learning Outcomes Worksheet.

These materials are intended for IARE training purposes only. Outcomes, assessments, and rationale may have been modified to meet training needs.

Bloom's Taxonomy Verbs



Using verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy in your outcomes clearly defines the type of learning and/or improvement your department would like to measure. Bloom's Taxonomy verbs make it easier to align outcomes, assessments, and criteria for success. Well-crafted outcomes are the foundation to continuous improvement that is meaningful, manageable, and measurable.